

THE GREAT GATSBY



Chapters 5 and 6



Chapter 5: Central chapter

- Actual meeting between Gatsby and Daisy takes place



Awkward and unusual

- House all lit up: “blazing with light”
- “Your place looks like the World’s Fair”
- “Let’s go to Coney Island, old sport”
- “Suppose we take a plunge in the swimming pool? I haven’t used it all summer.”
- “He waited, looking at me with suppressed eagerness.”

“I’m going to call Daisy ...”

- “I’m going to call up Daisy tomorrow and invite her over here to tea.”



Sideline business

- Gatsby awkwardly offers Nick a “confidential” sort of business deal
- Nick turns him down
- Midwestern sense of morality helps Nick make his decision



The day arrives

- ◎ “The day agreed upon was pouring rain.”



Get ready!

- ⦿ A man dragging a lawn-mower ... said that Mr. Gatsby sent him to cut my grass.”
- ⦿ “I drove into West Egg Village to buy some cups and lemons and flowers.”
- ⦿ “The flowers were unnecessary ...”
- ⦿ “... a greenhouse arrived”



Gatsby arrives

- “front door opened nervously, and Gatsby, in a white flannel suit, silver shirt, and gold-colored tie, hurried in”
- “He was pale, and there were dark signs of sleeplessness beneath his eyes.”
- Man on a first date?
- “Finally he got up and informed me ... that he was going home.”
- “Why’s that?”



“I can’t wait all day.”

- ⦿ “Don’t be silly; it’s just two minutes to four.”
- ⦿ “sound of a motor turning down the lane”
- ⦿ “Daisy’s face, tipped sideways beneath a three-cornered lavender hat, looked at me with an ecstatic smile.”
- ⦿ “Are you in love with me ... or why did I come alone?”



“For a minute ...”

- ⦿ First, no sound.
- ⦿ Then, a choking murmur and part of a laugh.
- ⦿ Then, Daisy’s voice on a clear, artificial note:
- ⦿ “I am awfully glad to see you again.”



Gatsby against mantelpiece

- His head rested against a “defunct mantelpiece clock”
- Gatsby: “distraught eyes”
- Daisy: “sitting, frightened but graceful, on the edge of [her] chair”
- “The clock took this moment to tilt dangerously”



Symbol of clock

- Is the clock a symbol of Gatsby's attempt to stop time?
- "I'm sorry about the clock."
- "It's an old clock."



“This is a terrible mistake”

- ◎ “You’re just embarrassed”
- ◎ “Daisy’s embarrassed, too.”
- ◎ “You’re acting like a little boy.”
- ◎ “Once more it was pouring.”
- ◎ “After half an hour, the sun shone again.”



“Radiantly happy”



- “He literally glowed”
- “A new well-being radiated from him and filled the little room”
- Light imagery
 - “twinkle-bells of sunshine in the room”
 - “he smiled like a weather man”
 - “... like an ecstatic patron of recurrent light”
- Gatsby has come alive again – rediscovered his dream



“Come to my house”

- ⦿ “I’d like to show her around”
- ⦿ “You’re sure you want me to come?”
- ⦿ “Absolutely, old sport.”
- ⦿ “My house looks well, doesn’t it” he demanded. “See how the whole front of it catches the light.”
 - Gatsby sounds like Tom
- ⦿ Nick calls Gatsby to task:
 - “It took me just three years to earn the money that bought it.”
 - “I thought you inherited your money.”

“That huge place *there*?”

- The princess is astounded.



“Enchanting murmurs”

- “He reevaluated everything in his house according to the measure of the response it drew from her.”
- “He stared [as if] none of it was any longer real.”



Stage 3

- First embarrassment
- Then unreasoning joy
- Finally all-consuming wonder
- At what? Her presence
- “Now, he was running down like an overwound clock.”



Crying over shirts?

- “two hulking patent cabinets”
- “I’ve got a man who buys me clothes”
- “He took out a pile of shirts and began throwing them, one by one, before us...”



What do the shirts symbolize?

- Daisy isn't crying about the shirts, but over what they symbolize – Gatsby's extraordinary dedication to his dream: winning her.
- Daisy could have had money AND love.

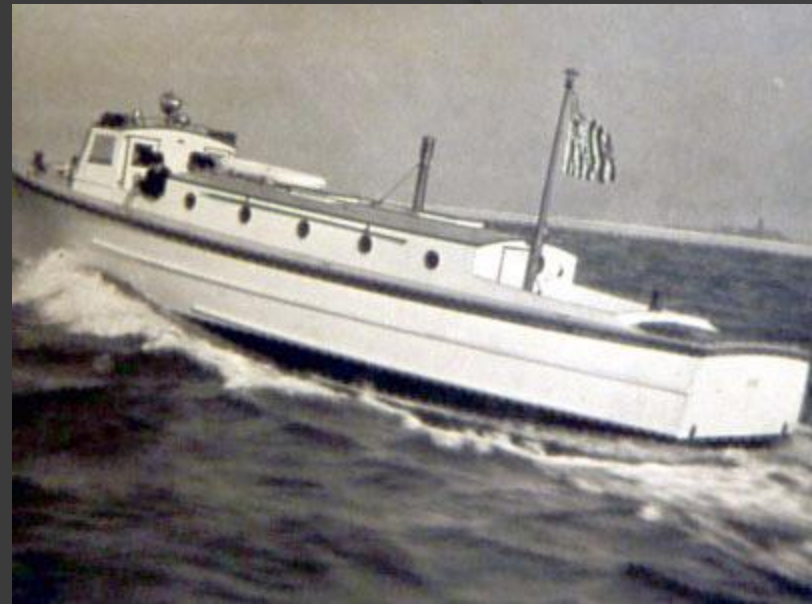


“If it wasn’t for the mist”

- “If it wasn’t for the mist we could see your home across the bay.”
- “The colossal significance of that light had now vanished forever.”
- No long a symbol – now just a green light
- Until now, Gatsby had believed that if he could only have Daisy, he would be happy forever.

Who is Dan Cody?

- “He’s dead now. He used to be my best friend years ago.”



“Here’s a lot of clippings – about you.”



Telephone rings ...
“I can’t talk now ...”

Dreams fulfilled?

- Nick wonders if Daisy can ever be as wonderful or magical as Gatsby's *idea* of her.
- We are drawn to Gatsby by the sad knowledge that dreams are often more beautiful than dreams fulfilled.



“Faint doubt”

- Did Daisy tumble short of his dreams?
- Why was his illusion filled with “colossal vitality”?
- “He had thrown himself into it with creative passion.”



Daisy's voice

- “I think that voice held him most, with its fluctuating, feverish warmth, because it couldn't be over-dreamed – that voice was a deathless song.”
- Both a joy and a sadness in a love as great as theirs.



Chapter 6: The American Dream

- Rags to riches story
- Fortune made through ingenuity and resourcefulness



First person narrative

- Big Question: Why doesn't Fitzgerald give an account of the emotional relationship between Daisy and Gatsby from the time of their reunion until the catastrophe?
- Nick can only related what he knows.
- Also, the emphasis is on the dream, not the relationship.



James Gatz of North Dakota

- ⦿ North Dakota farm family
- ⦿ Parents were “unsuccessful and shiftless farm people”
- ⦿ He never, in his mind, accepted them as family
- ⦿ Met Dan Cody at 17

Jay Gatsby of West Egg, Long Island

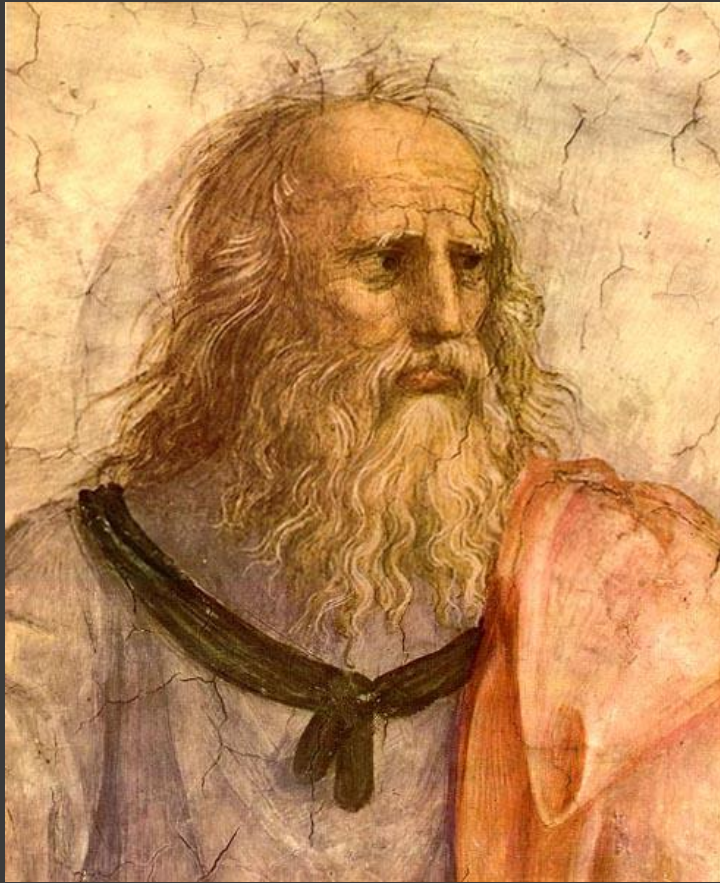
- ⦿ “sprang from his Platonic conception of himself”
- ⦿ “He was a son of God”
- ⦿ “To this conception he was faithful to the end”

“Name ready for a long time”

- In a strange way, he never saw himself as “James Gatz.”
- James Gatz loafed on beach of Lake Superior
- Jay Gatsby rented a rowboat and warned Dan Cody of a squall coming in



Platonic Ideal



- Plato believed that our material bodies are not our real selves, but only physical images of our ideal or perfect selves
- Gatsby had an image of himself to which he gave the name “Jay Gatsby”
-

Lutheran college of St. Olaf

- “An instinct ... had led him ... to the small Lutheran college of St. Olaf in southern Minnesota”
- Stayed there two weeks
- Felt the experience was “[indifferent] to the drums of his destiny”
- Was forced to perform janitor’s work to pay his way



Still searching ...

- Gatsby “drifted back to Lake Superior and was searching for something to do on the day that Dan Cody’s yacht dropped anchor in the shallows alongshore.”



Who is Dan Cody?



- ◉ 50 years old
- ◉ “ ... product of the Nevada silver fields, of the Yukon, of every rush for metal since '75.”
- ◉ Transactions in Montana copper “made him many times a millionaire”
- ◉ “an infinite number of women tried to separate him from his money”

“Personal Assistant”

- Jay Gatsby was employed “in a vague personal capacity ...”
- “in turn steward, mate, skipper, secretary, and even jailor”
- “Dan Cody sober knew what Dan Cody drunk might soon be about”
- The “arrangement” lasted five years
- Dan Cody: “the pioneer debauchee”

Due to Dan Cody ...



- “It was indirectly due to Cody that Gatsby drank so little.”
- “And it was Cody that he inherited money – a legacy of twenty-five thousand dollars.”
- “He didn’t get it.”
- Penniless again



“Finally, I went to his house”

- One Sunday afternoon
- “hadn’t been there two minutes when somebody brought Tom Buchanan in for a drink”
- “I was startled”
- Tom, a pretty woman, and a man named Sloane



“I know your wife ...”

- ⦿ Gatsby almost aggressive
- ⦿ Tom: “That so?”
- ⦿ Mr. and Mrs. Sloan: haughty
- ⦿ “We’ll all come to your next party”
- ⦿ Polite offer made for Gatsby and Nick to join them
- ⦿ Gatsby accepts – breach of etiquette
- ⦿ Class consciousness again – snobbery of East Eggers

Double standard

- “I wonder where in the devil he met Daisy. By God, I may be old-fashioned in my ideas, but women run around too much these days to suit me. They meet all kinds of crazy fish.”
- And then they leave Gatsby.



Party at Gatsby's

- We see Gatsby's party through Daisy's eyes
- "Tom was evidently perturbed at Daisy's running around alone, for ... he came with her"
- The evening had a "peculiar quality of oppressiveness"
- "Tom's arrogant eyes roamed the crowd."



Scene is putrid, rotten

- “...except for the half-hour she'd been alone with Gatsby, she wasn't having a good time.”
- Associating with “tipsy people”
- Fun at the previous party, but now ...?
- “... what had amused me then turned septic on the air now.”
- Guests seem ill-humored, out of control, false
- All seem part of a phony stage play



“Who is this Gatsby anyhow?”

- “Some big bootlegger?”
- “A lot of these newly rich people are just big bootleggers, you know.”
- Nick: “Not Gatsby”
- “... must have strained himself to get this menagerie together.”
- Daisy: “He owned some drug-stores, a lot of drug-stores. He built them up himself.”
- A lie?



“She didn’t like it.”

- ◉ Very important scene between Nick and Gatsby
- ◉ Gatsby feels “far away” from Daisy.
- ◉ Key: “He [Gatsby] wanted nothing less of Daisy than that she should go to Tom and say: ‘I never loved you.’”
- ◉ Nick: “I wouldn’t ask too much of her. You can’t repeat the past.”
- ◉ Gatsby: “Why of course you can!”
- ◉ He MUST win Daisy to satisfy his own Platonic ideal of himself.



Five years ago

- ◉ In Louisville, Gatsby's dream (love) became incarnate (made into flesh) in Daisy
- ◉ "He knew when he kissed this girl ... his mind would never romp again like the mind of God."
- ◉ "At his lips' touch she blossomed for him like a flower, and the incarnation was complete."





Tragedy of Jay Gatsby?

- His choice of Daisy as the person in whom to embody his dream.

Chapter 7: The most important chapter in the book

Coming up ...

